

Sustainability Committee
Minutes of Meeting
September 9, 2015

Present: Lynn Stoddard (chair), Bill Lennon, Shawn Santasiere, Paul Shapiro, Kay Holt, Susanna Everett, Rich Miller, Kristin Schwab, Rebecca French (guest), Matt Hart (staff), Virginia Walton (staff)
Present from the Ad Hoc Climate Action Task Force: George Rawitscher, Gary Bent, Greg Anderson, Margaret Rubega, Julianna Barrett, Don Hoyle, Chad Rittenhouse, Tim Vadas, Joyce Rawitscher (guest)

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 pm by Stoddard.

Introductions were made.

The June 10, 2015 and July 8, 2015 minutes were accepted on a motion by Shapiro/Santasiere, with Holt and Everett abstaining.

Stoddard reviewed the role of the Ad Hoc Climate Action Task Force as approved by the Town Council. Hart added that the Town is in the process of selecting a consulting team to do an assessment of, among other things, the energy efficiency and potential for renewable energy in the municipal buildings. He would like the task force to help analyze the emissions data for the municipal operations that the town has been tracking and recommend realistic reduction goals. Other comments on the task force's role included the need to find sources of money to implement projects, address strategies for managing erratic precipitation, consider the impact climate change will have on our financial system and determine how the task force will interact with the sustainability committee.

Rebecca French, Director of Community Engagement at the Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA) in Avery Point, introduced the committee to CIRCA's programs. CIRCA's priorities are the environment, climate and coasts, infrastructure resilience and policy analysis and design. CIRCA's research is being done out of UConn on creating highly accurate flood inundation maps for Connecticut. Historical flood inundation maps should be available in December 2015. By December 2016, maps showing projected flood inundation should be available. CIRCA offers two funding programs. Matching funds are available up to \$100,000 to assist municipalities applying for grants that require matching funds. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Municipal resilience grants are available up to \$100,000. Projects should be replicable for other CT municipalities. Monies need to be spent within 18 months. Applications are due Oct 15, with a webinar on Sept 21 at 11 am. Rebecca will provide members with a link to the webinar. It is anticipated that this grant will be offered again. French pointed out that NEMO's expertise in storm water issues; Stormwise's information on tree canopy and the Connecticut Climate Change Preparedness Plan are invaluable resources. Federal funding sources include disaster recovery funds, FEMA hazard mitigation grants and EPA and DOE technical assistance grants.

Schwab reported that the interns working on a sustainable landscape plan for the area around the town hall/community center combined information from the three draft plans the committee reviewed earlier this year into one plan. The committee will review the draft plan at its next meeting.

Stoddard & Santasiere reported that the sustainability committee will have an opportunity to comment on the bike friendly community plan that is being drafted by the Bike Mansfield group. A bike-pedestrian count is being taken next week. Volunteers are needed for the North Eagleville/Hillside Roads and Routes 44/195 intersections. Walton will resend the contact information for those who would like to volunteer.

Walton reported on a Food Too Good To Waste campaign that is getting started in the schools. She stated that volunteers are needed to help with the low-waste effort during the Celebrate Mansfield Festival on September 20, 2015 from 12 to 4.

The meeting was adjourned at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Walton